Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
Advanced Systems & Concepts

SUCCESS STORY

Counter Sniper ACTD's Contributions Go Beyond its Planned Life

ACTD technologies often enable follow-on products, well beyond the ACTD's planned life. Such is the case with the 1996 Counter Sniper ACTD.

The ACTD was initiated in response to the 1996 U.S. deployment to Bosnia, where snipers were a problem. The ACTD sought to make available systems that could locate snipers to eliminate them. The systems were given to warfighters for evaluation and they were subsequently prepared for deployment.

The ACTD also identified viable counter sniper systems and defined their uses, which agencies modified as other needs arose and as warfighters sought and bought capabilities. One system was VIPER, developed by the Navy Research Laboratory. It detects heat from a fired weapon well beyond its effective range. During the 2002 Washington, D.C., sniper shootings, it was installed on an airship (pictured right) that was cleared for use on the day the snipers were caught.

Another ACTD product was the Tactical Asset for Gunfire Identification and Targeting – Counter Sniper (TAGIT-IT-CS), which the Defense Advanced Research Agency (DARPA) developed. It uses sensors and microphones spaced over an area to detect and identify a muzzle blast. Its commercial developer produced the system under the name System for the Effective Control of Urban Environment Security (SECURES) the Washington, D.C., police department later purchased it.

Offspring of ACTD's Bullet Ears – BOOMERANG

A third ACTD product called Bullet Ears, also developed by DARPA, detects gunfire's sound and/or a bullets shock wave, locating a shooter in three dimensions. When Operation Iraqi Freedom began, the Department of Defense requested that Bullet Ears' maker provide a counter sniper system. The resulting system was the offspring of Bullet Ears, called BOOMERANG, which is a vehicle-mounted system used in Afghanistan and Iraq. For more information on the ACTD program, visit: www.acq.osd.mil/jctd/ .